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ALLEGHENY COUNTY QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY 2023 - DETAILED RESEARCH METHODS

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2023 Allegheny County Quality of Life Survey: Detailed Survey Methods

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The 2023 Allegheny County Quality of Life survey was conducted Summer - Fall 2024 by the University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) at the University of Pittsburgh. The survey contained 137 questions and was set up to be completed on line for most respondents, with a telephone follow up or option for harder-to-recruit demographic populations.

The survey was distributed in multiple ways:

1. A web-based survey was sent to members of Pitt UCSUR Regional Research Registry (PURR) who are residents of Allegheny County. This is an IRB-approved research registry of over 9,000 regional residents who are willing to participate in survey research studies (https://ucsur.pitt.edu/registry.php). The initial email invitation link was sent to 7,857 UCSUR registry members who live in Allegheny County on August 7, 2023, with follow-up email invitation sent August 12, 2023. Additional follow-up email requests were sent to targeted demographic groups in the registry (minority and younger members) on August 16, 2023, and August 21, 2023. The survey was distributed through the platform Qualtrics.

2. This first phase of the survey dissemination resulted in 1,738 completed surveys for a response rate of 22%.
   a. Note that this is technically a non-probability sampling method, as registry/panel members are volunteers and, thus, statements about "margin of error" are not appropriate, as these apply only to probability sampling designs.
   b. To reduce potential bias, the data were adjusted using statistical "raking": methods for age, sex, race, and education to make the sample more representative of the Allegheny population eighteen and older. This is the standard approach in the survey industry when relying on survey registries and panels for population estimates. We are encouraged that our weighting method resulted in estimates that closely matched external population benchmarks for

Home ownership; Percent spending 30% or more on housing; and Labor force participation rate.

3. A second and third phase of the survey was conducted Fall 2023 to reach underrepresented demographic groups in the first phase of the survey, including minority and younger age group members.

    a. The second phase of this involved telephone surveys to targeted populations through:

        i. Research registry members who agreed to be reached by telephone for surveys; and

        ii. Phone numbers from by the firm Dynata, which provided telephone numbers for targeted populations in select areas.

    b. A third phase of the survey was conducted with partner organizations and direct outreach to their members and/or contacts, with prospective respondents taking the survey either through a directed email link or by a telephone survey conducted by a staff interviewer. This phase also included a Spanish language version of the survey for Spanish-speaking respondents of community partner organizations and contacts.

    c. The second and third phases of the survey dissemination increased the number of survey respondents in multiple ways:

        i. Black/African American respondents increased by 184 to total of 412 for the survey and twenty-two additional Latino/Hispanic respondents for a total of 52 respondents identifying themselves as of Hispanic or Latino descent.

        ii. Telephone survey respondents = 265 surveys.

    d. Total survey respondents = 2,038. These are completed surveys; partial surveys are not included in the final dataset.

4. Survey data are compared to previous UCSUR Allegheny County Quality of Life surveys from 2011 and 2018. Most important are comparisons with the 2018 data, which we regard as pre-COVID19 pandemic information compared to the current period coming out of the pandemic. The 2018 Quality of Life survey also employed a non-probability web-based method with research registry members. The 2011 Quality of Life survey was a probability sample telephone survey (including both landline and cell phones) conducted using random digit dialing (RDD). Both surveys were weighted for probability of selection, age, and sex to make both more representative of the county population age 18 and over at those times. Using weighted data from each survey year allows for comparisons across common questions over time. The decisions for the 2018 and 2023 surveys to use a non-probability web-based survey design were based on both costs and the continuing reduction in response rates to RDD telephone surveys, particularly for targeted populations.

5. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) were then used to geo-code survey respondents (through the platform ArcGIS Pro 3.2). Survey respondents were asked to identify their

location through listing the nearest street intersections to their home. Of the 2,038 final responses for the survey analysis, geocoding was successful for 2,011 respondents, or 98.6%.

$RACE[a]	White/Caucasian	1560	73.8%	76.8%
	Black or African American	414	19.6%	20.4%
	Native American or Alaskan Native	37	1.8%	1.8%
	Asian or Asian American	52	2.5%	2.6%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.0%	0.0%
	Other (specify)	49	2.3%	2.4%
Total		2113	100.0%	104.1%

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